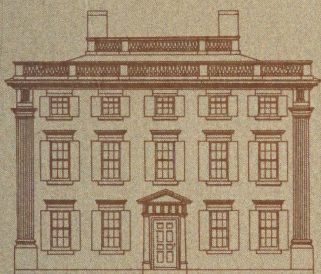
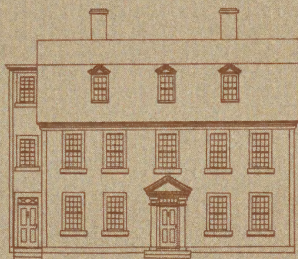


# ESSEX INSTITUTE

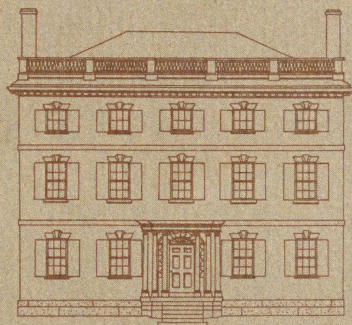
## Historic House Booklet Series



Peirce-Nichols




Crowninshield-Bentley



Gardner-Pingree

EDITED BY

Anne Farnam and Bryant F. Tolles, Jr.

Essex Institute, Salem, Massachusetts  1978







# THE ANDREW-SAFFORD HOUSE



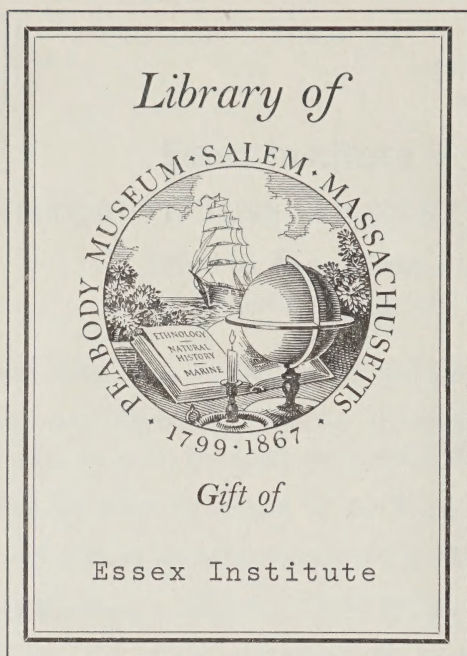
BY GERALD W. R. WARD

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COVER ILLUSTRATION: The Andrew-Safford House and Barn, 13 Washington Square West, Salem, east front facade. Photograph by Walter J. Stickney, ca. 1921.



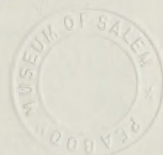
# The Andrew-Safford House

Historic House Booklet Number Six



BY GERALD W. R. WARD

FOREWORD BY BRYANT F. TOLLES, JR.



Essex Institute · Salem · Massachusetts · 1976

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## Foreword

FOUNDED in 1848 by the merging of the Essex Historical Society (incorporated in 1821) and the Essex County Natural History Society (incorporated in 1836), the Essex Institute is one of America's oldest and most venerable regional historical societies. The Institute is supported almost entirely by private funds, and is composed of the James Duncan Phillips research library, a museum of American fine and decorative arts, and a group of seven period houses, six of which are open to the public. The Institute's collections include books, pamphlets, periodicals, graphic materials, furniture, paintings, and other decorative and historic objects associated with the civil history and the people of Essex County, Massachusetts, since the early seventeenth century. Through its varied treasures, collected over many generations, the Essex Institute is uniquely able to recount the life and culture of one of the most historically important areas in the northeastern United States.

Of its many fascinating possessions and programs, the Essex Institute has been perhaps most widely associated with the maintenance and interpretation of its historic house properties. One of the nation's first private organizations to enter the field of historic preservation, the Institute acquired and relocated its first historic house property—the John Ward House (1684)—in 1910, and has added to its collection of representative local domestic architecture over the years since. Today, the Institute boasts a nationally significant group of historic dwellings which span sequentially the history of residential architecture in Salem from the era of its early settlement and growth in the seventeenth century to the mid-Victorian period.

Three years ago, under the guidance of my predecessor, David B. Little, a project was initiated to research and compile an updated series of illustrated articles treating each of the Institute's houses. From January 1974 to April 1976 these articles, written by Boston University doctoral

candidates Gerald W. R. Ward and Barbara M. Ward, appeared individually in the Institute's quarterly *Historical Collections*. Now, thanks to a generous grant from the McCarthy Family Foundation Charity Fund, it is possible to make the Ward articles, expanded and supplemented with other material, available in reasonably priced pamphlets for general distribution.

None of this, of course, could have been possible without the painstaking efforts of the authors; the museum and library staff; my assistant, Katherine W. Richardson; and my coeditor, Institute curator Anne Farnam. We hope that the readers of these pamphlets will profit educationally from them and will experience the same enjoyment from the subject matter as did those of us involved in the editorial process. The printed word or the photograph cannot do complete justice, however, to the houses themselves; they and their rich contents must be directly experienced for one to appreciate their merit as documents of the American past.

BRYANT F. TOLLES, JR.  
*Director, Essex Institute*

#### AUTHOR

GERALD W. R. WARD was awarded an A.B. degree, *cum laude*, with a concentration in American national government, from Harvard University in 1971. Presently he is a doctoral candidate in the American and New England Studies Program at Boston University, where the emphasis of his studies is on American art and architecture. During the summers of 1973 and 1974 Mr. Ward was a National Endowment for the Humanities Museum Fellow at the Essex Institute, at which time he researched and compiled articles for this historic house booklet series. During the academic year 1973-74 he was involved in practicum courses at the Institute as a cataloguer of the wallpaper collection and as an editorial assistant. In 1974-75 he was an N.E.H. Fellow in the Garvan and Related Collections office of the Yale University Art Gallery. Currently he is working on his doctoral thesis.



## The Andrew-Safford House

IN 1947, the Essex Institute acquired for preservation purposes the Andrew-Safford House, located at 13 Washington Square West, just a few yards diagonally to the north and east of the main Institute buildings. Built in 1818–19 for John Andrew by an as yet unknown builder, the Andrew-Safford House is the most prepossessing and monumental of the many three-story brick mansions erected in Salem over a thirty- or forty-year span, and it has survived in splendid condition. The following essay attempts to provide a social and architectural backdrop against which a visit to the Andrew-Safford House will be more meaningful and enjoyable.

### I

The ever-watchful Reverend William Bentley has provided in his methodical way an ample record of the building of the Andrew-Safford House. He notes, for example, that on 27 March 1818 John Andrew was “measuring his lines” on his property, establishing the dimensions of his new house just ten days after he had pieced together the lot with purchases from Jonathan Hodges and John Gardner.<sup>1</sup> By the 13th of

1. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 216, leaf 45, 17 March 1818 (Hodges to Andrew), and Book 216, leaf 43 (Gardner to Andrew). Andrew completed his lot with the purchase of a third parcel of land from Stephen Webb on 7 November 1818 (Book 219, leaves 64–65). This deed from Webb makes mention of a schoolhouse located on the property; Benjamin F. Browne noted that “on the northeastern corner on Brown Street stood a one-story schoolhouse, in which Mr. Knapp had a private school” (“Youthful Recollections of Salem,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 50 [1914]:289). This school was taken down to make room for the Andrew-Safford barn.

As this series of articles on the houses of the Essex Institute draws to a close, I would like to express my thanks to the following: to David B. Little, for conceiving the project and having enough confidence to allow me to undertake it; to Huldah Payson, for letting me write these articles when she could do a better job herself; to the staff of the Essex

July, workmen had started to dig the foundation, and Bentley next recorded that after a few days of digging, the "remains of a Blacksmith Shop," probably of the seventeenth century, were uncovered. By September, the foundation seems to have been completed, and by mid-November, the walls were up and the roof was covered. In February of 1819, Bentley commented that work on the house had "continued incessantly." Construction continued through the spring and summer of 1819, and by autumn the house was nearing completion. On 21 October 1819, Bentley took note of the most distinctive feature of the house:

This week Capt. John Andrew is raising his four large columns on the south side of his house. These are the largest ever raised in Salem. They stand on the basement story on the S.W. part of the house. The base is of free stone, the shafts fluted, of pine. The capitals are not yet raised.

To Bentley, these columns represented "building in true as well as great style." The last column was set in place two days later, and the house was probably ready for occupancy within another month or so. Through the entries in Bentley's diary, we can compute a construction period for the house of approximately eighteen months.<sup>2</sup>

As the Andrew-Safford House was rising on the west side of Washington Square (or the common), John Forrester and Nathaniel Silsbee were erecting similar mansions on the north side. The entire area was taking on a more ordered and dignified appearance, a process which had begun in 1802 and was renewed in 1819 with even greater vigor. Bentley, who lived on Essex Street to the south side of the common, notes on 13 July 1819 that "great labour has been bestowed on Washington Square." A marsh at the northeast corner "which has been in the last degree offensive has been effectively raised by a bed of stones covered with gravel." Further, "the walks within & the streets without

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Institute library, for their help over the past several years; to the National Endowment for the Humanities, for providing me with research time; to Bryant F. Tolles, Jr., for permitting me to continue the series with the current article; and finally, to my wife, Barbara, who coauthored the Ward House article and has been of great assistance with all the others.

2. Bentley's references to the Andrew-Safford House can be found on the following pages of volume 4 of *The Diary of William Bentley, D.D., Pastor of the East Church, Salem, Massachusetts* (Essex Institute, 1905-1914), pp. 510, 526, 530, 533-34, 547, 561, 577, 600, 605, 623-24, and 634.



have been gruelled with uncommon care" and various parts of the common were raised and "all its angles taken off." Bentley adds that "the many new buildings have justified this care of this section of the town."<sup>3</sup>

Not all observers of the American scene, including one Thomas Hamilton, felt that buildings such as those rising around Washington Square were entirely worthy of attention. Hamilton, a Scotch novelist with a keen eye and a sharp wit, traveled throughout the eastern United States in the early 1830s. While in New England, he opined that

the country residences of the wealthier citizens are generally adorned with pillars, which often extend from the basement to the very top of the house, (some three or four stories,) supporting, and pretending to support, nothing. The consequence is, that the proportions of these columns are very much those of the stalk of a tobacco-pipe, and it is difficult to conceive anything more unsightly.<sup>4</sup>

Hamilton never visited Salem, but one might safely assume that he would not have been an admirer of the Andrew-Safford House. Phil M. Riley, writing a century after the house was built, had a very different view of these houses and their pillars. Riley wrote that the Andrew-Safford estate, "embracing a stable at the right in harmony with the house and a fine old formal garden at the left, exemplifies as do few others the best that money could provide in Salem a century ago."<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, "architectural decadence began to manifest itself" after 1818 in Salem, to Riley's eye, and both Riley and Fiske Kimball felt that certain details were of a weight and mass which foreshadowed "the coming of Victorianism."<sup>6</sup> Indeed, the house was completed the same year that Queen Victoria and John Ruskin were born.

3. Bentley, *Diary*, 4:605, 610.

4. Thomas Hamilton, *Men and Manners in America* (Philadelphia: Carey, Lea, and Blanchard, 1833), 1:83.

5. Frank Cousins and Phil M. Riley, *The Colonial Architecture of Salem* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1919), p. 95. Riley goes on to add that "at the time of its completion it was regarded as the most costly private residence in New England, and no finer example of the characteristic architecture of its time remains in such an excellent state of preservation."

6. Cousins and Riley, *Colonial Architecture*, p. vii, and S. Fiske Kimball, *Domestic Architecture of the American Colonies and of the Early Republic* (1922; rpt., New York: Dover, 1966), pp. 247-48.

How, then, does one assess the Andrew-Safford House? Is it a transitional work of architecture, bridging the way between McIntire and the Greek Revival? Such a view, which is hinted at by Riley and Kimball, is tempting, but essentially misleading. The Andrew-Safford House can best be understood as one of the masterpieces of Salem traditional neoclassical architecture, a style which dominated in Salem from the 1790s until the 1820s or even the 1830s. The builder of the house was working in this tradition and was comfortable within it. The unusual features of the house, notably the columns on the south side, are not attempts to utilize the more literal forms of the Greek Revival which were being employed in the work of Latrobe, Mills, Strickland, and others elsewhere; rather, they seem to be an attempt on the part of John Andrew to display his wealth in the most ostentatious manner possible within the accepted parameters of conservative Salem taste.<sup>7</sup>

Facing east on what was once Newbury Street and is now Washington Square, the Andrew-Safford House rises monumentally from its solid stone foundations (Figure 1). The house first strikes one as massive and very vertical in feeling. The smooth brick facade rises without the interruption of rustication, quoins, string courses, or other decorative embellishments from the foundations to the balustrade. The evenly spaced windows, with their delicate keystone lintels, are set flush with the wall surface; the eye is forced to concentrate upon the elaborate portico and Palladian window located along the central axis. A regularity of spacing and the repetition of motifs are the themes upon which the builder of the house depended in creating his composition. The fanlight over the front door, for example, is echoed in the arch of the window above, in the fan motifs (placed over the windows and alternating with rows of balusters) of the balustrade, in the entrance on the south side, and again several times in the interior. The south wall moves back in a regular rhythm; first, straight back past the first two windows, then in to pass behind the row of tall columns, and then it indents again to form the wall of the ell attached to the back of the house. A balustrade runs evenly around the house, and largely obscures from view the hip roof, which also has a second and smaller balustrade at its crest. The tall

7. The conservative New England tradition in this period is discussed by William H. Pierson, Jr., in *American Buildings and Their Architects: The Colonial and Neoclassical Styles* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970), pp. 221-31.



thin chimneys rise through the roof and tower into the sky, emphasizing the vertical thrust.

The brick bonds used in the house lead one to think that John Andrew was striving to make the maximum impression. The front and sides of the house and the front of the barn are laid in Flemish bond, while the ell, the recessed portion of the south wall of the main house, the north and west walls of the barn, and the connection between the house and barn are laid up in the less expensive common bond, with seven rows of stretchers for every row of headers. It has been suggested that the house was originally painted gray in imitation of stucco, as was the case with many other houses built in this period.<sup>8</sup>

The entrance motif (Figure 2) is superb. A short flight of steps leads up to the elevated portico. Delicately attenuated Corinthian columns support the overhanging canopy; the recessed door is topped with a fanlight gracefully divided into ovals and ellipses, and bordered with sidelights also divided with thin mullions. Smaller, engaged columns flank the door, and are miniature versions of those supporting the portico.

Similar engaged columns are repeated in the window above. This Palladian window is topped with an elliptical arch, ending in rosettes at the corners. Closely related to the window on the Dodge-Shreve house (see below), this window is a magnificent statement when seen from the ground below, and allows light to flood the stairway inside while providing a view across the common.

It is the south side of the house which is the most distinctive and which has gained the most notoriety (Figure 3). Its four Doric columns, as attenuated as those in the portico,<sup>9</sup> were conceived as separate entities; they lack a continuous entablature between them. Their placement on the side rather than in front of the house is unusual, but the south side of the house receives the most favorable exposure to the sun and also faces the garden, which was an original feature of the estate. A door from the second floor leads onto a small veranda sheltered behind these columns. Granted that they do bear some resemblance to the

8. Kimball, *Domestic Architecture*, p. 153, and Cousins and Riley, *Colonial Architecture*, p. 96.

9. Columns were systematically attenuated in the neoclassical period (Kimball, *Domestic Architecture*, pp. 226–27). The columns of the Andrew-Safford House are over fifteen diameters in height.

shaft of an early tobacco pipe, the Andrew-Safford House columns are dramatic in their placement and impressive in their execution. John Andrew and his builder were trying for something dramatic, something memorable, a feature so distinctive as to make the house famous. In this regard, they succeeded.

The floor plan of the Andrew-Safford House is not unlike that of the neighboring Gardner-Pingree House, built some fifteen years earlier. The house is divided by a central hallway, and rooms are generally dispersed four to a floor. The double parlor, side entrance and stairs, and butler's pantry all have their counterparts in the Gardner-Pingree House. Similarly, an ell, presumably for cooking and servants' quarters, projects from the back of each house (Figure 4). One difference lies in the fact that a small connecting passageway leads to an elegant and dignified barn to the north of the Andrew-Safford House, with a carriage entrance on Brown Street.

The overt similarities tend to diminish in importance as one enters the house, however. The interior of the Andrew-Safford House is open and spacious. The front door opens into a small vestibule, which in turn flows into the central hallway (Figure 8). The stairs move up the left, curving to the right at the top. Both front and rear entrances to this wide hallway are graced with elliptical arches, again containing glazed fanlights with gently curving sash divisions.

A similar window, supported by engaged Ionic columns, forms the top of the archway between the parlors on the north side of the house (Figure 5). According to Asher Benjamin, such a double parlor arrangement was convenient "both for the circulation of air, when windows and doors are opened, and for the reception of large companies."<sup>10</sup> The most lavishly decorated room in the house, the front parlor, is embellished with a marble mantelpiece, a panel of imported wallpaper, carved door casings, and a plasterwork ceiling.

The wallpaper (Figure 6) is a scene from the French paper designed by Louis Lafitte (1770–1828) and Merry-Joseph Blondel (1781–1853) and first printed in 1816 by Dufour of Paris.<sup>11</sup> One of a series of scenes

10. *The American Builder's Companion* (1827, 6th ed.; rpt., New York: Dover, 1969), p. 110.

11. This discussion of the Cupid and Psyche wallpaper is based on Nancy McClelland, *Historic Wall-Papers from Their Inception to the Introduction of Machinery* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1924), pp. 281–82, 286, and *Historic Wallpapers in the Whitworth Art Gallery* (London, 1972), pp. 50–52.



based on Jean de la Fontaine's version of *Les Amours de Psyche* (1669), the panel in the Andrew-Safford House is entitled in translation, "Psyche Discovers That the Sleeping Youth Is Cupid, the God of Love." The presence of this paper, recognized as Dufour's masterpiece, is an important indication of John Andrew's taste and ambitions.

The central rosette in the ceiling, flanked by quarter-rosettes in each of the corners, also marks this parlor as being of special importance. Fiske Kimball felt that "in spite of the forms of the leaves here, their increasing weight and the smooth border-mouldings portend the coming of Victorianism."<sup>12</sup> Riley also felt that another feature of this room, the doorways into the hallway, were "typical of the last period of Colonial [sic] architecture in Salem when the Corinthian order was much in favor, but the influence of the decadence that came with the Greek revival had begun to make itself felt."<sup>13</sup> While the modillions with acanthus carving which support the corona in the entablature are Corinthian in spirit, Riley regarded the rest of the door frame, including the "bull's-eye corner blocks," as "over-elaborate and somewhat clumsy." Certainly there is little delicacy about them, and none of what Wayne Andrews calls the feminine aspect of the woodwork in the Gardner-Pingree House.

The front room on the south side of the hallway, first used as a dining room, later as a library, and now known as the Victorian room, will be discussed below, because of the later changes in the woodwork which give the room its current name. From this room, access to the side entrance and side stairs, and to a butler's pantry, can be gained. Both the pantry and the small side hallway lead to the rear room, originally the kitchen. This arrangement was again in accord with the advice of Asher Benjamin, who recommended that a builder

let the kitchen be situated, so as to have as easy a communication with the dining room and breakfast rooms as possible; let the pantry or china closet communicate with the dining room by a door, and with the passage from the kitchen by a door or window.<sup>14</sup>

12. See note 6.

13. Cousins and Riley, *Colonial Architecture*, p. 163.

14. *American Builder's Companion*, p. 109.

The ell, which contains a third set of stairs, was probably used as additional space for cooking, storage, and sleeping.

The upstairs rooms in the main part of the house are arranged four to a floor, and their woodwork is generally simple and undistinguished. The hallway on the second floor is particularly delightful, however, being "open" at each end by a characteristic fanlight arrangement, the window at the rear containing a division in the shape of a classical urn.

While the floor plan of the house is thus very similar to that of the Gardner-Pingree House, the result is quite different. The open feeling of the Andrew-Safford House is achieved through a different set of proportions, and through the repeated use of fanlights and transom windows, allowing for privacy but also allowing light to travel through the house from one part to the other. The differences are those of scale, rather than fundamental; Andrew was satisfied with the room arrangement that had been in style in Salem for at least twenty years.

As yet the name of the housewright or architect in charge of building the Andrew-Safford House has not been discovered. No doubt John Andrew exerted considerable influence himself on the appearance of his home, for Bentley notes that in the case of the Andrew-Safford House (and the Forrester and Silsbee houses as well) the "work is by the day & the Owners are present."<sup>15</sup> Also, it should be remembered that a team of artisans, each with special skills and with more latitude for individual expression than housebuilders have today, were responsible for the final appearance of the house.<sup>16</sup> One member of this team was Joseph True (1785-1873), the Salem wood-carver of the nineteenth century. True billed John Andrew for carving a total of fifty "Ornaments" for the house,<sup>17</sup> and his name is the only one that can be documented for the Andrew-Safford House. The precise nature of his contribution—which fifty ornaments did he carve?—remains unclear.

There exists a tradition that the builder of the house thought his work to be of such quality that he set in the house "a tile, bearing in

15. Bentley, *Diary*, 4:547.

16. For example, when the Howard Street Church was built in Salem in 1805, "seven master carpenters took separate parts of the house on contract," and a Beverly firm did the mason work, while Samuel McIntire was the architect. See Reverend C. C. Beamon, "The Branch or Howard St. Church," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 3 (1861):273.

17. Henry W. Belknap, "Joseph True, Wood Carver of Salem, and His Account Book," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 78 (1942):143.



relief the initials of his name and the date of the building.”<sup>18</sup> If such a tile exists within the house, it has not yet been found. Some clues to the builder’s identity can be gained, however, through a brief comparative look at other Salem buildings of the same vintage.

A considerable amount of building was going on in Salem in the years just before and after 1818. The Custom House was completed in 1819, a new brick Market House was built in 1816, the Salem Almshouse was begun in 1815, the Essex Bank Building on Central Street was designed by Bulfinch in 1811, and numerous houses around Washington Square and on Chestnut Street went up in the years between 1810 and 1830.

The Andrew-Safford House, similar in spirit and in detail to many of these buildings, is clearly a product of this era of building made possible by Salem’s success in commercial ventures. For example, the window lintels of the house are similar to those on the Silsbee-Mott house, 35 Washington Square, erected in 1818, and may have been inspired by those of the double house at 21–23 Chestnut Street, built in 1814–15. While the columns of the Andrew-Safford House are certainly unusual, the Captain Joseph Waters house (later the Bertram Home for Aged Men) at 114 Derby Street, built in 1806–07, originally had a side entrance with two shorter columns supporting a hip roof and creating a walkway or porch close in spirit to the larger version at the Andrew-Safford House. Many resemblances, including the use of imported French wallpaper, can be seen between the Andrew-Safford House and the Forrester house, 29 Washington Square, built in 1818. But perhaps the house nearest in appearance is the Pickering Dodge-Shreve house, 29 Chestnut Street, begun in 1822 and finished three years later. The portico of the Dodge-Shreve house, although rectangular rather than semicircular, and the door with fanlight and sidelights, as well as the unusual Palladian window above the entrance, are nearly identical in every detail with their counterparts on the Andrew-Safford House. From an outline left on the brickwork of the Dodge-Shreve house, it appears that this house also had a balustrade atop the portico, the pres-

18. Robert S. Rantoul, “James Osborne Safford, Member of the Finance Committee of the Essex Institute from 1874 to 1883,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 20(1883):88. A brick, with the date 1818 and the word “Danvers” still faintly legible on its surface, is set in the outside of the brick wall fronting the common, across from the barn, and perhaps this is what Rantoul is making reference to in the above article.

ence of which would further increase its similarity to the entrance ensemble of the Andrew-Safford House.<sup>19</sup>

One David Lord was the builder of the Dodge-Shreve house,<sup>20</sup> and because of the marked similarity between the two houses, a brief consideration of his career is in order. Described by Fiske Kimball as “the chief Salem builder in the second decade of the nineteenth century,”<sup>21</sup> Lord was born in Ipswich, the son of Daniel and Elizabeth Lord, about 1783.<sup>22</sup> His father was probably a cabinetmaker, one of many members of the Lord family engaged in the woodworking trades.<sup>23</sup> Lord came to Salem in 1800,<sup>24</sup> and was a founding member of the Howard Street Church in 1803.<sup>25</sup> We know that he was building houses in Salem as early as 1806–07,<sup>26</sup> and on 2 July 1815 he was one of three members of the building profession to sign a contract to build the Salem Almshouse, which was designed by Charles Bulfinch.<sup>27</sup> In partnership with Joseph Edwards, Lord executed the carpentry work on the Salem Custom House, completed in 1819.<sup>28</sup>

Lord is most noted as the “Architect” of the Dodge-Shreve house. His role in the building of this house was described by U. G. Spofford, another carpenter working on the job, in an 1884 letter to F. H. Lee,

19. Photographs and descriptions of this and other houses mentioned in this paragraph can be found in Cousins and Riley, *Colonial Architecture*. The Waters house is seen in its original form in the top of plate 109.

20. Richard H. Wiswall and Henry W. Belknap, “Notes on the Building of Chestnut Street,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 75(1939):219. The house is illustrated opposite p. 226.

21. S. Fiske Kimball, *Mr. Samuel McIntire, Carver, the Architect of Salem* (Essex Institute, 1940), p. 54.

22. *Vital Records of Salem, Massachusetts, to the end of the year 1849*, 6 vols. (Essex Institute, 1916–1925), 5:406.

23. Thomas Franklin Waters, *Ipswich in the Massachusetts Bay Colony* (Ipswich, Mass.: Ipswich Historical Society, 1917), 2:261.

24. See the Ipswich Church Records, First Church Dismissions, which includes “David Lord, to Salem, 30 November 1800,” as printed in the *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 58(1922):24.

25. Beamon, “The Branch or Howard St. Church,” p. 273.

26. Kimball, *McIntire*, p. 54.

27. Anne Farnam, “Uncle Venner’s Farm,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 109 (1973):74, and Harold Kirker, *The Architecture of Charles Bulfinch* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 379.

28. Robert S. Rantoul, “The Port of Salem,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 10(Part I, 1869):59, and David Mason Little, “Documentary History of the Salem Custom House,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 67(1931):25, 149–50.



known through Lee's copy preserved in his scrapbooks at the Essex Institute.<sup>29</sup> Spofford states that Lord "made and drew out several patterns of fancy Architraves," after which Mr. Dodge "would call in and select those he preferred and we young Carpenters would profit by it and lay up in our memory these patterns for future use." John Andrew probably shared a similar relationship with the builder of his house.

In 1826, Lord was the head carpenter for the fourth building of the First Church in Salem,<sup>30</sup> and thirteen years later, his plan for a new Mechanics Hall was accepted. He supervised the construction of that building, which was completed in October of 1839.<sup>31</sup> This was perhaps one of his last commissions, for he died of palsy on 24 November 1845, at age sixty-two.

Lacking other evidence, all we can assume on stylistic grounds is that Lord was inspired by the Andrew-Safford House when he drew his "fancy" plans for the Dodge-Shreve house. It is obviously unfair to reason backwards and declare that he was copying his own work in doing so, and a further complication arises in that Lord is known to have been working on the Custom House at the same time that the Andrew-Safford was being built. But for now, the name of David Lord is the best lead we have in searching for the builder of the house, and in any event, his career merits a more detailed investigation.

Many workmen were involved in the construction of any building; Spofford's letter mentions a total of fourteen or fifteen artisans, including himself and Lord, and it does not appear to be a complete list. Masons were, of course, vitally important in creating brick mansions, and the name of David Robbins, master mason, is associated with the construction of several buildings at this time. He was at times a partner of Lord's, as they both worked on the Almshouse and the First Church.<sup>32</sup> While there were many qualified masons in Salem and adjacent towns,

29. Volume 3, pp. 116-19. Also see "John H. Nichols' Reminiscences of Salem, Written in 1884," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 81(1945):179.

30. Talbot Hamlin, *Greek Revival Architecture in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 362.

31. William D. Dennis, "The Salem Charitable Mechanics Association," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 62(1906):16-17. Lord was also a charter member of the Association at its beginning in 1817 (p. 33).

32. See notes 27 and 30.

it is interesting to note that David Robbins's name appears in a list of creditors in John Andrew's estate inventory taken in 1829.<sup>33</sup>

## II

It is unfortunate and somewhat surprising that so little is known about John Andrew (1774–1829). We do know that he was born in Salem on 9 July 1774, one of two sons of John, a jeweller with a shop on Essex Street, and Elizabeth (Watson) Andrew. On 28 September 1804, he married Catharine Forrester, and they had four children: John Forrester, Charles Amburger, Catharine Forrester, and Isaac Watson.

The earliest and to date only biographer of Andrew tells us that he was “a member of the firm of Archer and Andrew, merchants, who failed.” John then “went to Russia as a commission merchant in which business he achieved success.”<sup>34</sup> Recent research has uncovered little to add to this bare outline of what was no doubt an interesting and exciting life during Salem's most prosperous era.

From 1798 to 1808, Andrew is listed as a shipowner in partnership with Samuel Archer in the Salem ship registers.<sup>35</sup> Their partnership seems to have dissolved after the latter date, probably because of a financial crunch resulting from the diminution of trade during the early years of the nineteenth century. On 3 March 1809, Jefferson's embargo was repealed, and trade resumed with vigor. The commerce with Russia, begun as early as 1784, was particularly lucrative, and this may have inspired Andrew to leave Salem and establish himself as a commission merchant in Russia, probably at St. Petersburg. It seems likely that he spent a total of about seven years in Russia, being absent from Salem between the conception of his second child in January of 1809 and that of his third child in October of 1816.

33. Essex County Probate Records, docket #661.

34. Benjamin F. Browne, “An Account of Salem Common, and the Levelling of the Same in 1802, with Short Notices of the Subscribers,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 4 (1862):82. Throughout this essay, the dates of various births, marriages, and deaths are drawn from the Salem *Vital Records* unless otherwise noted.

It is perhaps worth recording here that John Andrew was uncle to John Albion Andrew (1818–1867), the Civil War governor of Massachusetts. Governor Andrew is reputed to have visited the Andrew-Safford House many times, but he was never the owner, as is sometimes erroneously stated.

35. A. Frank Hitchings (compiler), *Ship Registers of the District of Salem and Beverly, Massachusetts, 1789–1900* (Essex Institute, 1906), *passim*.

The trade with Russia was based on her need for West Indies and American goods.<sup>36</sup> Massachusetts merchants were adept at this and Massachusetts ships controlled most of the Russia trade down to the Civil War. In exchange for canvas, duck, hemp, Russian and Swedish iron, and household linen, the Russians received tea, coffee, rum, flour, and tobacco. Profits in this exchange were enormous, but a large share was always taken by the Russian consignee, acting as a middleman. A William Ropes of Salem went to St. Petersburg in 1832 and established himself after a short period as a commission merchant, and earned a handsome fortune.<sup>37</sup> He may have been following the example of John Andrew in doing so. Whatever the precise case, Andrew was so successful that upon his return to Salem he was able to build what was regarded in its day as the most costly residence in New England, one that rivaled the splendor of the Elias Hasket Derby mansion, razed in 1815. No doubt Andrew's years abroad raised his level of aspiration and stimulated his desire to own something magnificent.

Andrew continued to engage in shipping ventures after his return to Salem, but his life was cut short. On 6 July 1829, just three days before his fifty-sixth birthday, Andrew died of what was diagnosed as "organic disease." He was regarded as one of Salem's "most public spirited and respected citizens."<sup>38</sup>

A room-by-room inventory of his worldly possessions was taken by the probate court after Andrew's death, and its simple listings are the only record we have of the original furnishings of the house. Several interesting facts are revealed by a brief analysis of this inventory, which is printed below. It is clear that the rooms at the front of the house were more expensively furnished than those at the back of the house. The northeast room on the second floor contained the most expensive furnishings of any chamber (totaling \$109.00), and was probably the master bedroom. The southeast room on the first floor (now the Victorian room) appears to have been the dining room. For some reason, the rooms in the ell do not appear in this listing. What is now the dining room was apparently originally the kitchen.

36. The best account of this trade is in Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts 1783-1860* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961), pp. 154-55, 192-94, and 294-97. Salem's particular role is summarized in greater detail by Charles S. Osgood and H. M. Batchelder, in their *Historical Sketch of Salem* (Essex Institute, 1879), p. 187.

37. Morison, *Maritime History*, pp. 295-96.

38. Andrew's obituary appeared in the *Salem Gazette* for 7 July 1829.



About fifty different types of objects are mentioned. The most expensive single item of furniture was a bed in the master bedroom valued at \$50.00. Chairs ranged in value from several at 12½¢ each, to an “easy chair,” priced at \$7.00. Other expensive items included a sofa and a sideboard, each assessed for \$20.00.

A comparison with the inventory of the Peirce-Nichols House, also taken in 1829, provides an insight into Salem standards of furnishing.<sup>39</sup> Both houses contained nearly the same number of chairs, eighty-six in the Peirce-Nichols House, and eighty-five in the Andrew-Safford House. Each inventory lists eight looking-glasses, one clock, one sideboard, and similar numbers of tables. The Peirce-Nichols inventory includes seven waiters, the Andrew-Safford a total of six. While differences between the lists are evident, do these similarities suggest that John Andrew and Jerathmiel Peirce were following an established system of interior decoration?

The inventory as printed below was taken on 14 August 1829, and is compiled from two copies contained in John Andrew’s docket #661 in the Essex County Probate Records. Figures giving the subtotal to be carried forward on each page of the original have been omitted. Editorial comments are enclosed within [brackets].

## Personal Estate

### Goods & Furniture

#### S.E. Lower Room

4 Tables	28 —
11 Chairs	6 —
1 Looking Glass	20 —
1 Sofa	8
4 Pictures	4 —
2 Crickets	— 75
Crockery	40 —
Silver Ware 128 ozs. 15 dwts. @ #1:12½	144 96
Plated Ware	12 —
Work Table	1 —

39. The Peirce-Nichols inventory is printed in Gerald W. R. Ward, “The Peirce-Nichols House,” *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 111 (1975):171–86.



Figure 1. The Andrew-Safford House (1818–19), 13 Washington Square West, Salem, Essex Institute. *Photograph by Richard Merrill, 1975.*



Figure 2. Front portico, Andrew-Safford House. *Photograph by Richard Merrill, 1975.*





Figure 3. Side entrance as seen from the garden, Andrew-Safford House.



Figure 4. The south and west facades of the Andrew-Safford House. Photograph by Richard Merrill, 1972.



Figure 5. The Andrew-Safford House, double parlor, west wall, Essex Institute. Riley wrote of this picture, "the vista through this arch, the chaste white woodwork and the tasteful mahogany furniture and other appropriate furnishings form a picture of spacious elegance the equal of any in Salem." *Photograph by Frank Cousins, c. 1910.*





Figure 6. Andrew-Safford House, east wall of double parlor showing wallpaper panel of "Cupid and Psyche" between the windows. The elaborate parlor set in the Empire style was a wedding gift to Catherine Peabody Gardner from her father, Joseph Peabody, in 1827. Purchased in Italy by Peabody's agent, the set consists of six side chairs, two settees in the "Recamier" form, one large sofa, and two small sofas. The set was refurbished in 1974 with the aid of a grant from the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities. *Photograph by Richard Merrill, 1975.*



Figure 7. "Safford group, June, 1878." Pictured are James O. and Nancy Maria Safford and their children, including William O. Safford as a young boy, in the library, the southeast room on the first floor.



Figure 8. Andrew-Safford House, front central first-floor vestibule and hallway, framed by an elliptical arch and pilasters. *Photograph by Frank Cousins, 1909.*



## Front Entry

1 Lamp	4 —
1 Hat Stand	75

## Drawing Rooms

Glass Ware	3 00
1 Sofa	20 —
10 Chairs	4 —
1 Lamp Stand	1 —
1 Side Board	12 —
1 Glass Ship	1 —
1 Work Table	5 —
1 Dressing Glass	3 00
Tea Caddie	2 00
2 Glass Shades	1 50
6 Waiters	5 00
1 Cricket	50

## S.W. 2nd Story

1 Bed Bedstead & Mattrass	25 00
1 Bureau	6 00
5 Chairs	3 50
2 Crickets	60
1 Wash Stand	4 00
1 Night Stand	1 00
1 Looking Glass	5 00
Carpet	5 00

## S.E. 2nd Story

Bed Bedding & Bedstead	30 —
Bureau	8 —
Looking Glass	8 —
8 Chairs	5 33
1 Night Table	2 —
1 Card Table	1 50
1 Easy Chair	7 —
1 Cricket	35
Backing & Carpet	10 —

## 2nd Story Front Entry

1 Table	5 00
5 Chairs	2 50
Stair Carpet	10 00
Lantern	75
Table	3 00

## N.E. 2nd Story Chamber

1 Bed, Bedding, Bedstead, & Window Curtains	50 —
12 Chairs	12 —
1 Bureau	12 —
1 Mirror	15 —
2 Tables	2 —
1 Night Table	2 50
1 Clothes Press	5 —
1 Writing Desk	1 —
1 Wash Stand &c	5 —
1 Cricket	50
1 Easy & 1 Lolling Chair	4 —

## N.W. 2nd Story Chamber

1 Bed, Bedding, Bedstead & crib	18 00
1 Cricket	20
1 Bureau	1 50
7 Chairs	1 25
1 Looking Glass	1 25
1 Table	20
Carpeting & Rugs	2 00

## N.E. 3d Story Chamber

Bed Bedding & Bedstead	30 —
4 Chairs	2 —
1 Bureau	3 —
1 Wash Stand	2 00
3 Trunks	7 —
4 pr. Cotton	10 —
3 pr. Bellows	1 50
Damask	15 —
1 Looking Glass	3 —

### N.W. 3d Chamber

Bed, Bedding & Bedstead	5 —
1 Bureau	1 50
2 Trunks	2 00
4 Chairs	1 20
1 Looking Glass	1 00

### Garrett

1 Cot Bed	1 00
1 Fire Screen	3 00
8 Fenders	9 00
6 pair Andirons	30 —
1 Trunk	1 50
1 Stove	40
2 pr. Bellows	1 00
1 Bed	10 00
1 Crib & Cradle	2 —
1 Spy Glass	10 —

### S.E. 3d Chamber

2 Beds, Bedding & Bedstead	12 —
1 Bureau	9 —
1 Looking Glass	2 —
1 Wash Stand	1 —
1 Night Table	2 —
6 Chairs	1 80

### S.W. 3d Chamber

Bedstead Bed & Bedding	3 —
1 Bureau	1 —
2 Chairs	25
1 Cot Bedstead	2 —
1 Table	12

### Cellar

Cider Vinegar &c &c	50 —
Brandy Rum &c	100 —
Balance Sundries	17 —



## Garrett

1 Brussels Carpet	50 —
1 ——— do.	16 —
1 ——— do.	12
1 Stair do.	20

[Both copies of the inventory are identical to this point. One list continues to enumerate household effects, while the other copy moves on to list the goods at Andrew's farm in Danvers; the lists are combined below, with the household items appearing first.]

## Kitchen

1 Time Piece	7
4 Tables	2
9 Chairs	2 25
1 Looking Glass	75
1 Wash Stand	1
Crockery Ware	6
Tin Ware	6
Iron do.	3 50
Lamps &c.	5

## Barn [at the Andrew-Safford house]

2 Phaetons	110
2 Chaises	60
1 Saddle & Briddles	4
1 Grindstone	— 50
4 planes, Work Bench & tools	3
1 Horse	45
1 Cow	16
Corn & Hay	22
Wood in the house	10
Saw, Axe & Butter & Wages	3 00
1 Water pot 3 shovels 3 forks	1 50
Knives & Forks	7 00
14 ps. Damask Silk	140 00
Sheets pillow cases & quilts	25 00

Blankets	20 00
Table Linen	15 00
Books	25 00
Wearing Apparel	50 00

at Farm in Danvers

23 Cows .....@ \$16.—	368 —
1 Bull .....	16
14 Pigs .....10.....	140 —
5 do. ....5.....	25 —
1 Horse .....	40 —
4 pair Oxen .....65.....	260
1 Corn Cracking Mill .....	11 —
1 Cart & Harness .....	10 —
1 Horse Waggon (Red) .....	3 —
2 Heavy Ox Carts .....20.....	40 —
1 pair Ox Wheels .....	10 —
2 Ox Waggons with Apparatus @50 .....	100 —
4 Ox Ploughs .....5.....	20 —
2 Horse Ploughs .....5.....	10 —
2 Stone Drags & 2 Ox Harrows (10t).....	10 —
1 Horse Harrow .....	5 —
1 Ox Roller .....	10 —
1 Horse Roller .....	5 —
1 Horse Cultivator .....	5 —
2 Ox Sleds & Apparatus .....@8.....	16 —
2 Cutting Machines .....	15 —
4 Yokes & Bows .....@1.50.....	6 —
3 Draft Chains .....@1.25.....	3 75
1 Single Ox Yoke .....	50
Lot Scyths, Shovels, Spades, Augers &c ....	15 —
About 2 tons Old Hay @8 .....	16 —
About 2 tons New Hay .....8.....	16 —
1 Large Rock Chain .....	2 —
1 Grind Stone .....	1 —
1 Sideboard .....	3 —
1 Desk .....	5 —
1 Sofa .....	4 —

1 Pembroke Table .....	2
1 Wash Stand, Bowl & pitcher .....	1 50
7 Chairs 1 Rockg. & 6 leatherbottom .50..	3 50
4 Yellow Chairs .....30.....	1 20
1 Looking Glass .....	1 50
1 Bedstead, Bed, Bedding .....	6 —
1 Bureau .....	5 —
1 Looking Glass .....	1 —
5 Straw Mats & 1 Rugg lot .....	1 —
1 Brass Kettle .....	5 —
1 Cheese Safe .....	2 —
2 Churns .....2.50.....	5 —
1 Cheese press .....	1 50
Lot ten Milk pans & Wood ware .....	28 —
Lot old Barrels & casks .....	8 —
Lot Ten Milk pails .....	3 —
2 Iron Crow Bars .....@1.....	2 —
Sundry Small Articles .....	1 —

#### in Meeting House Cellar

136 Barrels Yellow Ocre or paint .....	552 50
about 4 tons Bastend [?] Sandal Wood .....	20 —
1 Sleigh .....	10 —
1 pair Sleigh Runners .....	3 —
1 [?] Squills [?] .....	— 50
1 pair Carriage wheels .....	7 —
Lot Wood Knots .....	1 —

[One copy of the inventory goes on to list Andrew's stocks, including five shares in the East India Marine Hall Corporation, and his various financial debits and credits. These are omitted here.]

As her dower in his estate, the widow Catharine Andrew (1780-1845) received half of the Andrew-Safford House, the other half passing to their son John Forrester Andrew. The legal document transferring ownership of her portion to Catharine provides a look at the arrangement of buildings on the estate at an early date, and is therefore reprinted



at length below despite the somewhat convoluted and repetitious legal phraseology. Catharine's share is described as

beginning at the southeasterly corner of the Garden attached to the Mansion house of said Andrew situated in Newbury Street in said Salem by land of Thorndike Deland thence running northerly by said Street to the partition wall on the north side of the front entry of the dwelling house, thence westerly as said partition wall now stands to the west end of said entry, thence to continue in a straight line by the kitchen wall to land of Joseph White thence southerly by said White's land until it comes to land of said Deland thence by said Deland's land as the fence now stands to the first mentioned bounds. And also the celler under that part of the said dwelling house situated on the land above described together with all that part of the dwelling house included. The owner or occupant of the Northerly part of said house to have the privilege of passing and repassing up and down the front stairs and the back stairs from bottom to top for the purpose of going into and coming out of the several rooms in said northern end of said house. And to have the privilege of passing and repassing through the front doorway into the front entry of said house from said Newbury Street. The said Catharine to hold in right of dower all that part of the barn attached to said house which is south of a line drawn from the northern most part of the chaise house door in said barn to the western wall of said barn, said line to run parallel with the partition as it now stands between the stable part of said barn and said chaise house and the land under the same with the privilege of passing and repassing from the kitchen of said house to said part of said barn set off to said Catharine. And also the privilege of using the northerly yard of said house for the purpose of going in and out of the barn from the highway with carts and carriages of every kind and description, and also the privilege of using said yard for sawing and splitting wood in. And the said Catharine to have the use of the well in the yard of said house for all purposes in common with the owners or occupants of the other part of said estate. The owners or occupants of said Northerly end of said house to have the privilege of passing and repassing through the passage

way of the south part of said barn to the north Necessary and to said Newbury Street by the avenue immediately north of the dwelling house [Brown Street] and to have the privilege of using the northern most necessary in said barn.<sup>40</sup>

Catharine passed and repassed throughout the house until her death of apoplexy on 14 July 1845.<sup>41</sup>

At the time of his father's death, John Forrester Andrew (1805–1847) was unmarried. Also a merchant by occupation, he shared the house with his mother both before and after his marriage on 24 August 1837 to Louisa M. Daland (or Deland). John F. and Louisa made the Andrew-Safford House their home, and they had four children under its roof at two-year intervals beginning in 1838. Their happiness was short-lived, however, for John F. passed away "very suddenly" of a "heart complaint" the day after Christmas of 1847. The Salem newspaper noted that "he had been unwell, but not so as to be confined to his chamber, and was conversing with some of his family about five o'clock, when he fell from his seat, and immediately expired. He was a merchant, much esteemed, and his loss will be severely felt by a large circle of friends."<sup>42</sup>

John F.'s half of the house (the other half had apparently passed at Catharine's death in 1845 to another of her sons, Isaac Watson Andrew) was placed in a trust administered by J. Ingersoll Bowditch of Boston and Benjamin Merrill of Salem.<sup>43</sup> His widow and children would be allowed to occupy the house and land as long as they wished. In 1851, the trustees purchased the other half of the house, thus gaining full possession.<sup>44</sup> By 1860, Louisa apparently no longer had any desire to remain in the house, and on 5 July the Andrew-Safford House was sold

40. This document, dated 5 October 1829, is in John Andrew's docket #661 in the Essex County Probate Records. Catharine received title to the property, however, on 31 October 1829, in a deed from Leverett Saltonstall, administrator of John Andrew's estate, recorded in Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 254, leaf 88. Thus, the legal ownership of the property after John Andrew's death until 1851 is somewhat tangled, but it is clear that the property remained in the hands of the Andrew family, and that the progression of occupancy occurred as described here.

41. Henry W. Belknap, "Simon Forrester and His Descendants," *Essex Institute Historical Collections* 71 (1935):48.

42. *Salem Gazette*, 28 December 1847.

43. Essex County Probate Records, Docket #31377.

44. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 452, leaves 144–45.

for \$12,000 to Edmund Smith of Salem, ending the Andrew family period of ownership.<sup>45</sup>

Edmund Smith is listed in various documents as a merchant and manufacturer, and the Salem Directory for 1861 gives his occupation as treasurer of the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company, one of the largest firms in town. He was married to Harriet C. Smith, and two of their children lived at home with them. Smith had died by 17 August 1864, on which date Harriet sold the house and land to Frederic M. Creamer of Salem for \$20,000.<sup>46</sup>

Creamer, also a merchant and a man of means, died shortly after taking possession of the house. On 24 June 1871, his widow Martha W. Creamer sold the house for only \$8,806 to James O. Safford, a well-established businessman, and moved elsewhere with her daughter May.<sup>47</sup>

This purchase by James Osborne Safford (1819–1883) marks the beginning of the seventy-six year era which gives the house the latter part of its hyphenated name. Safford was one of four children of Captain Ebenezer Safford, a tanner, and his wife Hannah Osborne.<sup>48</sup> He was born on 21 June 1819 (as the Andrew-Safford House was being built) at a house on the corner of Boston and Beaver Streets, in what was then Salem and is now part of Danvers. To continue in a genealogical vein, Safford married Nancy Maria Potter, daughter of James and Lydia (Eustis) Potter of Salem, on 29 June 1852. James and Nancy had three children: James Potter, William Osborne, and Elizabeth Frothingham.

At the age of nineteen, Safford took employment in the “well-established hides and leather house of James P. Thorndike.” In 1848, some ten years later, he had become a partner of Thorndike’s, and by 1851 he was in business alone. Safford’s business operations included “both the manufacture of leather and the sale on commission of leather and hides,” often undertaken at distant locations. He was devoted to his work, and he was very good at it.

Various organizations and institutions profited from Safford’s acute business sense, which he was ever willing to turn to the benefit of worthwhile causes. He was elected to the Salem common council from

45. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 609, leaves 170–71.

46. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 673, leaves 246–47.

47. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 833, leaf 271.

48. This sketch of James O. Safford is based on Robert Rantoul’s eulogy printed in these *Historical Collections* and cited above, and an obituary published in the *Salem Evening News* for 19 March 1883. Quotations are drawn from these sources.



1865 to 1868, where he served on the Joint Standing Committee on Finance and Appropriations. The Essex Institute, of which Safford was a member from 1854 until his death, benefited from his advice through his service on the Finance Committee. Safford also served for many years as a director of the North National Bank of Boston and the Naumkeag Steam Cotton Company.

Robert Rantoul noted that during James Safford's period of ownership, the Andrew-Safford House "doors were open to an ever widening circle. For his sympathies were catholic, and while the range of his acquaintance brought persons of varied character and mental equipment within his ken, he had that rare faculty, so invaluable to the host, of drawing his best from each." Rantoul went on to observe that the Andrew-Safford House, while a beautiful building, was also full of tradition, and had become in some sense a public institution already. Rantoul commented on

Its stately columns of hollow wood, said to be packed with rock salt from the Russia trade which furnished the wealth employed to rear it,—its masonry of bricks dipped hot in oil,—its floor of stone,—its solid chamber-walls, completing a structure impervious to sound, and of such enduring quality that the master-builder set in his monumental work a tile, bearing in relief the initials of his name and the date of the building,—the gossips' story of its ample hearthstones smoking with backlogs of sandalwood brought home for dunnage in our commercial era, and of parlor, hall and dadoed chamber full of the aroma,—such tales as these floating in the air, be they mythical or true, predispose us to expect a hospitable atmosphere within, and this expectation, during Mr. Safford's occupancy, was not defeated.

James Safford, living in the midst of all these traditions, may have felt somewhat uncomfortable with the relatively austere early classical revival interior of the house. We know that he repapered the southeast room on the first floor, by then known as the library, shortly after taking possession of the house.<sup>49</sup> It is likely that he also added the rich

49. When this room was repapered in July of 1969, workmen found underneath several layers of old paper a note saying that "this library papered Nov. 9, 10, & 11, 1871 by James W. Arend [?]." Above this was another note, revealing that "This library papered by H.M. Cass, Oct. 4, 1910." Before installing the new paper, the workmen added their own contribution to this documentation: "Papered by A. Gagnon, July 17-

and bold Victorian woodwork which graces this room, including the fearsome lions guarding the fireplace (Figure 7). The substitution of this woodwork for the original is the only major change to have taken place in the Andrew-Safford House, and the Institute has wisely left it in place as a valuable expression of the taste of its time.

After an illness of some three months' duration, Safford was stricken by a hemorrhage of the lungs and passed away at home at three o'clock on Sunday morning, 18 March 1883. He was sixty-four years old. The newspaper noted that he was "a widely known citizen, and universally respected for his uprightness and integrity." Safford "always envinced a deep interest in the welfare of Salem, and was ever ready to aid in any measure tending to the improvement of the city," establishing a family tradition which his son Billy would strongly continue.

At her husband's death, the Andrew-Safford House passed to Nancy Maria Safford (1831-1893). An active woman in her own right, Nancy Safford was a member of the Salem Oratorio Society, a director of the French Charitable Society and the Society for the Relief of Aged Women, and a faithful attendant at St. Peter's Church.<sup>50</sup> She was the fifth wife in succession to survive her husband among those couples who owned the house. Her own death came on 5 March 1893, "very suddenly and unexpectedly," although she had been ill for some time. By coincidence, Ann Maria Pingree, the widow of David Pingree, died in the same year. Both women left their houses to unmarried sons, who in turn lived in them for many years; after the deaths of these sons, both of whom were grandsons of the first family member to own the respective houses, each house came into the possession of the Essex Institute.

William Osborne Safford (1863-1946), who had been living in the house from time to time during the 1880s and early 1890s, came into full possession of the house after his mother's death. Known as the "Dean of City Officials" in Salem, William Safford lived a long and active life largely devoted to public welfare.<sup>51</sup> His education began in

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18, 1969. Weather hot as hell." See a memo of 25 July 1969 by Huldah Payson, Curator, Essex Institute Museum Files.

50. See her obituary in the *Salem Evening News*, 6 March 1893.

51. Sources for this discussion of William Safford are a biographical sketch in Claude M. Fuess (ed.), *The Story of Essex County* (New York: The American Historical Society, Inc., 1935), pp. 289-90, and an obituary in the *Salem Evening News*, 4 June 1946, which includes a photograph.

the Salem public schools, and was continued at Harvard College, where he was a member of the Class of 1884. After graduation, he attended the Law School for two years, but he chose to spend the next year traveling in Europe rather than getting his degree.

Upon returning from Europe in 1887, Safford pursued a career in the brokerage and investment business in Boston until about 1915, when he embarked on a life of public service which would continue for over three decades. In 1915 he was elected commissioner of health in Salem, and the following year he was elected to the city council, where he served (with the exception of two years) until his death. He also acted as chairman of the welfare board for thirty years, and was president of the Salem Fraternity, a boys organization. Safford strongly supported the Essex Institute, the Salem Athenaeum, and was a trustee of the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children. He truly gave "a measure of service to public affairs and to the improvement of conditions among his fellowmen that is representative of the ideals of American citizenship."

William Safford made several small changes to the house which are of interest here. A glass observatory, described in 1919 as being "of recent origin" and which had disappeared by 1925, was added, probably by William Safford, to the second-story porch on the south side of the house.<sup>52</sup> Safford repapered the Victorian room in 1910, apparently finding the paper installed by his father in 1871 not to his liking or in need of replacement.<sup>53</sup> Some stained glass, visible in photographs taken early in this century but since removed, was added to some of the interior lights, probably by William Safford.

A photograph of the double parlor on the first floor taken by Frank Cousins about 1910 (Figure 5) provides a fascinating glimpse of William Safford's taste in art and furnishings. Although one hesitates to make attributions on the basis of small details in an old photograph, several pieces of furniture appear to be eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century objects. A Massachusetts Chippendale desk appears in the right hand side of the picture, with a gate-leg table standing in front of it. A table in the rear parlor also appears to be in the Chippendale style, and a

52. Cousins and Riley, *Colonial Architecture*, p. 96, mentions "an intrusive glass conservatory of recent origin." It appears in photographs dated as early as 1907, but does not appear in photographs of 1925 or later.

53. See note 49.



desk and bookcase to the left of the double doorway was probably made in the early nineteenth century. Cousins and Riley speak of "tasteful mahogany furniture and other appropriate furnishings" in the house,<sup>54</sup> some of which, such as the settee in the left side of the double doorway, may be products of the Colonial Revival.

The pictures hanging on the wall are perhaps mementoes of Safford's year in Europe. Over the desk on the right-hand side is what appears to be a group of figures in a pre-Raphaelite style. Over that is a print or photograph of Sir Joshua Reynolds's portrait of *Charlotte, wife of Sir Robert Smith M.P. and her children*, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1787 and now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.<sup>55</sup> Over the fireplace and above the mirror in the rear parlor is a plaster relief of William Morris Hunt's popular sculpture, *The Horses of Anahita, or The Flight of Night*, also owned by the Metropolitan.<sup>56</sup> To the left of the doorway into the hall and highest on the wall is a photograph of a triptych by Giovanni Bellini for the Chiesa di Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari in Venice.<sup>57</sup> Family photographs and other prints, photographs, and paintings are scattered in abundance throughout the room. A bold floral wallpaper and oriental rugs on the floor complete Safford's decorative scheme, an interesting mix of old and new, American and European—one feels the presence of a person with a wide-ranging, eclectic, and not overly sophisticated taste.

Never married, Safford left his estate to his sister, Elizabeth F. White, "in consideration of her loving care of me for many years."<sup>58</sup> The Essex Institute purchased the house from Mrs. White and the estates of Nancy M. Safford and William O. Safford on 15 August 1947.<sup>59</sup>

54. *Colonial Architecture*, p. 166.

55. Illustrated in Ellis K. Waterhouse, *Reynolds* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1941), plate 272.

56. See Albert TenEyck Gardner, *American Sculpture: A Catalogue of the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1965), p. 22. Gardner notes that "plaster replicas were being sold in Boston as late as 1929 by a plaster firm there."

57. I would like to thank Patricia Rubin and Oswaldo Rodriguez, both doctoral candidates in the History of Art at Yale University, for their assistance in identifying this and other works of art visible in Cousins photograph.

58. Essex County Probate Records, Docket #217,111. Mrs. White apparently also lived in the Andrew-Safford house for many years.

59. Essex County Registry of Deeds, Book 3530, leaves 484-85.

It cost the Essex Institute exactly \$14,216 to purchase the Andrew-Safford House in 1947. It was the fourth major historic house preserved by the Institute. Stephen Phillips contributed \$9,625 of the purchase price, and other donations were received from James Duncan Phillips, the Salem historian (\$1,000), Guy W. Walker, Jr. (\$1,000), J. Frederick Hussey (\$1,000), Helen C. Frick (\$500), James H. Proctor (\$100), and twenty others who contributed \$50 or less. The purchase temporarily depleted the funds of the Institute, and although the problem was studied, little use could be made of the house for the first six or seven years. Some minor repairs were made to the roof, and it was suggested that "one of the rooms take the form of a memorial room to Mrs. Edward H. Eldredge, in the creation of a Story-Medici-Eldredge room, with objects associated with the three families displayed," but nothing came of this idea, and the house sat idle until the winter of 1952-53.<sup>60</sup>

At that time, new heating was installed, the electrical wiring was either repaired or replaced, and the house generally made ready for occupancy by a caretaker on a year-round basis. It was thought that the rooms might be used to display various collections of the Institute, or to hold Institute annual meetings. The Institute leadership asked for other ideas, "particularly if accompanied by an offer of part or all of the 'wherewithal' to carry them out."<sup>61</sup> Eventually it was decided that the house be used as the residence of the Institute director, and Walter Merrill, whose term of office began on 1 October 1954, was the first director to live there. He has been followed by Mr. and Mrs. Dean A. Fales, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. David B. Little and their family, and the current residents, Mr. and Mrs. Bryant F. Tolles, Jr., and their children. In 1972, the third floor began to be used for storage of the Institute's superb costume collection. Beginning in April of 1976, several rooms on the first floor, furnished with objects from the Institute collections, were opened to the public on a limited basis (Figure 6), marking another step

60. See *Essex Institute Annual Report*, 1947, pp. 18, 24, 30-31, 1948, p. 6, 1949, p. 17, and 1951, pp. 8-9, where President Phillips summarizes the situation as follows: "About once a month somebody comes to me and says: 'Why don't we put the Safford House in order inside and open it to the public?' The answer is we have no money available with which to do it."

61. *Essex Institute Annual Report*, 1953, pp. 7-8.

in the Essex Institute's important record of preservation and interpretation.

Few alterations have been made to the Andrew-Safford House since 1947. The only major changes took place in 1954-55, after the decision to use the house as a residence had been made.<sup>62</sup> The slate roof was replaced with asphalt shingles, and some later skylights were removed. The furnace was modernized, the trim painted, and the brick wall running north to south in the backyard was repaired, although "it was capped in a slanting fashion rather than rebuilt to its original height." On the first floor, a Victorian mirror in the front parlor was removed, revealing for the first time in many years the panel of "Cupid and Psyche" wallpaper (Figure 6). In the dining room, a Victorian archway was removed, and a Victorian white marble mantle was removed and replaced with a simple wooden mantel found in the barn of the Gardner-Pingree House. The kitchen area, now located in the ell, was extensively modernized, with old fixtures being replaced and new cabinetwork installed.<sup>63</sup> On the second floor, major changes included the installation of closets and new bathrooms. A new front door, based on that of the Forrester house, was added.<sup>64</sup> New wallpaper was installed in the Victorian room,<sup>65</sup> and other papers removed and walls painted. At some point, a small wooden addition used as a laundry was attached to the rear of the house (visible in Figure 4). Otherwise, the house has survived largely intact.

Few of us are ever fortunate enough to live in a dwelling such as the Andrew-Safford House. And as James Marston Fitch reminds us, "far from being narrowly based upon any single sense of perception like vision, our response to a building derives from our body's *total* response to and perception of the environmental conditions which that building affords."<sup>66</sup> Keeping this idea of the importance of experiential response in mind, I offer in conclusion the following thoughts about daily life in

62. See a "Memorandum Regarding Renovation of the Safford House 1954-55," Essex Institute Library.

63. These changes are noted on "Plans for proposed alterations to Safford House 1954-55," Essex Institute Library.

64. Kimball, *Domestic Architecture*, p. 284.

65. See note 49.

66. *American Building: The Environmental Forces That Shape It* (New York: Schocken Books, 1975), p. 2.



the Andrew-Safford House by David B. Little, former director of the Essex Institute, who lived with his family for seven years in the house:

To the Littles it was a happy, relaxed, informal, house despite its size. We could imagine children rushing around in it without fear of breaking anything. It is as different as can be from the Gardner-Pingree House. The great limestone slab inside the front door rests on a barrel vault of brick which once contained the wine-cellar. The stone is worn enough to allow a strong northeast wind to penetrate the house. Passing across the futile brass weatherstrip, the wind sings a loud and melancholy sound. The proportions of the house and its details are beautiful. There was joy for the eye everywhere it rested.<sup>67</sup>

It would be hard to ask more of any house.

67. Letter from David B. Little to the author, 29 December 1975, quoted by permission.









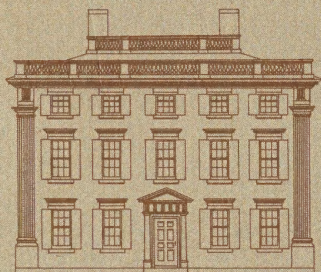




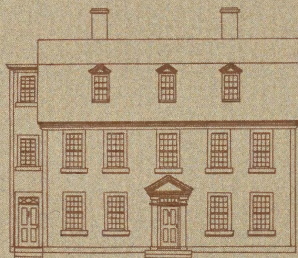


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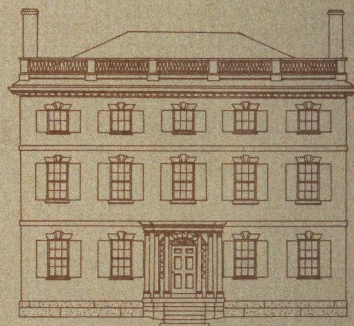
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